



Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

*"To protect and improve  
the health and environment  
of the people of Colorado"*

# NEWS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **New Television Public Service Announcement Highlights the Dangers of Flu: Mom Shares How the Virus Took Her Baby's Life**

DENVER - The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and The Children's Hospital has issued a television public service announcement warning residents about the dangers of influenza. The announcement, which aired Nov. 10 and will run through Dec. 31, features a mother whose 6-month-old died after being infected with the influenza virus in 2003.

Julie Moise, the mother featured in the public service announcement, said, "Since losing my son, Ian, I have dedicated my life to warning parents about how dangerous the flu can be. People often tell me that they do not get sick much, so they don't need a vaccination. What they're not understanding is that they can give the flu to their loved ones even if they don't feel sick themselves. Older people and babies are especially vulnerable to this disease."

Dr. Christine Nyquist, an infectious disease expert from The Children's Hospital in Denver, who also is featured in the announcement, said, "We see so many children each year that are hospitalized due to influenza. This disease is vaccine preventable, so it's important that people are vaccinated so that everyone can be kept safe from the flu."

The public service announcement is sponsored by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and The Children's Hospital of Denver.

An ample supply of influenza vaccine is allowing more people to be protected against the flu during the 2008-09 flu season. The influenza virus, or the flu, is a very contagious respiratory illness that can lead to serious health complications and sometimes death.

"The single best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu is to get the flu vaccine," said Dr. Ned Calonge, the state's chief medical officer of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. "More available vaccine means more protection for the most vulnerable people in our communities, such as babies, the elderly and those with certain health problems."

To better protect the public, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now is recommending that all eligible children ages 6 months through 18 years receive the influenza vaccine. Prior to this season the recommendation was for ages 6 months to 6 years. Immunizing more children against the flu better protects the entire community against an outbreak of flu. By preventing these children from getting sick, family members also are protected, as well as the other people these children come in contact with on a daily basis.

Every year in the United States about 5-20 percent of the population gets the flu, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications and about 36,000 people die. Some people, such as older people, young children and people with certain health conditions, are at higher risk for serious flu complications.

In addition to the health impact from the flu, the disease also can carry with it huge financial costs for persons who miss work due to their illness or the illness of a family member. According to the CDC, studies show adults receiving flu vaccine have 27 percent fewer missed workdays due to illness.

Vaccine manufacturers are projecting that as many as 146 million doses of influenza vaccine will be available for use in the United States this season. This is an all-time high supply of vaccine, making it possible for more people than ever to seek protection from the flu.

The flu season typically peaks in January or February. People can receive the influenza vaccine now and still have immunity through the season, which generally ends in March. For flu vaccine clinic information, visit [www.immunizecolorado.com](http://www.immunizecolorado.com) or call 1-877-462-2911.